

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

December 17, 2010

Secretary Kathleen Sebelius
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

RE: CFDA No. 93.525 – Cooperative Agreement to Support Innovative Exchange Information Technology Systems

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

We are writing in support of Maryland's competitive application for the Cooperative Agreement to Support Innovative Exchange Information Technology Systems. Under the leadership of Governor Martin O'Malley, Maryland has demonstrated its thorough commitment to implementing health reform as efficiently and effectively as possible. It perceives the creation of its Health Benefit Exchange as a critical step in complying with the Affordable Care Act and bringing the benefits of a competitive, transparent insurance marketplace to Marylanders. Seeking to leverage years of innovative policy development, Maryland's proposal aims to build on highly effective pilot programs in two of its largest counties to develop the front end of its Health Benefit Exchange. These pilots have deployed the Healthy Maryland eligibility solution (One e-App) to allow all residents to seamlessly enroll, obtain and maintain a full range of health coverage benefits, giving them information about coverage choices and determining their likely eligibility for public programs, federal premium subsidies, and federal small business tax credits.

Under the auspices of the Health Care Reform Coordinating Council created by Governor O'Malley and chaired by Lieutenant Governor Anthony Brown and Maryland's Secretary of Health, John M. Colmers, the State has conducted an extremely active and inclusive process for the last nine months to plan implementation of the Affordable Care Act. The Council has sought input and provided coordination across agencies and the stakeholder community. Thus, Maryland is poised to be a national leader in the development of consumer-friendly, cost-effective information technology systems for its Health Insurance Exchange. We believe Maryland is uniquely positioned to take full advantage of this grant opportunity through a combination of innovation in its technical solutions, readiness for implementation, and political stability that enables this effort to move forward without delay.

We urge the Department of Health and Human Services to support this grant application.

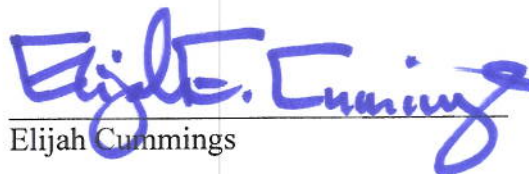
Sincerely,



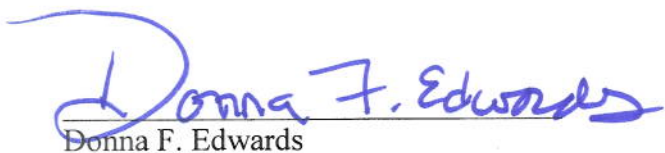
Barbara A. Mikulski



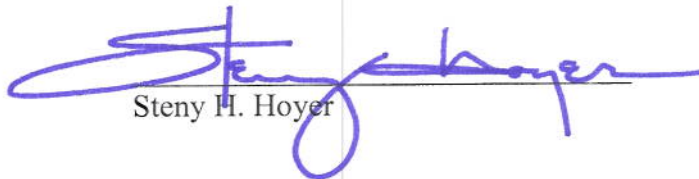
Benjamin L. Cardin



Elijah Cummings



Donna F. Edwards




Steny H. Hoyer



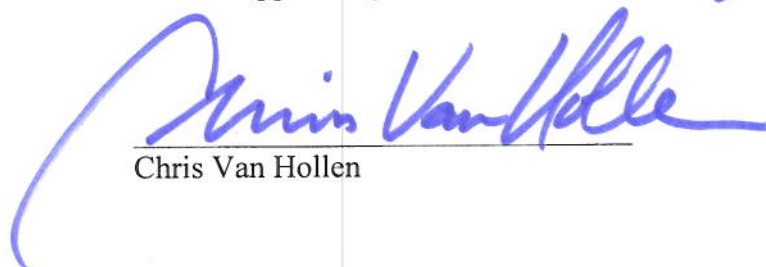
Frank M. Kratovil Jr.



Dutch Ruppersberger



John P. Sarbanes



Chris Van Hollen